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public mind should be set right in respect thereto. This phase of the subject was investigated a few years ago by Mr. Emory R. Johnson, of the University of Pennsylvania. His work, printed as an appendix to the Report of the Isthmian Canal Commission of 1901, comprises a vast amount of research and labor, and affords a basis for a full consideration of the commercial value of the canal. The military value of the canal is treated in the same report of the Commission.

It is not a pleasant task to point out defects, particularly as the author seems to fully appreciate them, and makes ample apologies for them in his preface. In dealing with the technical features the author has been led into several errors. Some result from his bias in favor of a sea-level canal, which he makes no effort to conceal. These errors, however, are not of great importance, and do not detract in great degree from the merits of the book.

Considerable space is devoted to the discussion of the formation of the Republic of Panama and the part taken by the United States at the time it was formed. While these relate properly to the history of Panama, they only relate remotely to the canal. The effort to justify the action of the United States as to its course at the time of the formation of the Panama Republic is more argumentative than historical.

The appendices, which are included in the volume, and which show the various treaties made by the United States with Great Britain, Colombia and Panama, are exceedingly useful. They enable the critical reader to form his own judgment as to their bearing and effect on the course of events. It is but just to say that on the whole the work is very creditable and will form a useful addition to the library of any student of Isthmian Canal affairs.

PETER C. HAINS.

Washington, D. C.

Joyce, P. W. *A Smaller Social History of Ancient Ireland.* Pp. xxiii, 574.

Price, \$1.25. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1906.

The civilization of early Ireland has not received the attention it deserves from those interested in early social development. This is the more to be wondered at as no other country of Europe presents a more promising field for research. Ireland has been subject to comparatively few foreign influences, and as a consequence her social institutions underwent remarkably little change until far along in the historical period. Moreover, a rich native literature existed, much of which has been preserved not only in the island itself, but scattered through the monastic archives of Europe, where it was carried by the Irish missionaries of the seventh and eighth centuries. The Celtic revival is gradually bringing this material to light, and the present book, an abridgment of the author's two-volume work, "A Social History of Ancient Ireland," published in 1903, gives an excellent idea of our present knowledge in this field. It is intended for the general reader, and is written in a pleasing and popular style. The author gives his own conclusions on

the various topics and avoids controversial discussions, the reader being referred to his large work for a full citation of authorities. The book covers the period from the earliest times to the Anglo-Norman invasion of the twelfth century, and is divided into three parts, entitled, respectively, Government, Military System and Law; Religion, Learning and Art; and Social and Domestic Life.

It is difficult to give a clear description of the government of early Ireland, with its confused system of tribal kings, district kings and provincial kings, culminating in the high king with his residence at Tara. There was no adequate subjection of one ruler to another, and, in spite of an elaborate system of hostages, it is evident, though this point is not dwelt upon, that the land was bound to be subject to the interminable warfare, feuds and jealousies inseparable from its clan organization until some form of order should be introduced by an effective foreign occupation. Unfortunately for Ireland, such outside influence was never applied systematically and wisely.

Mr. Joyce, who is one of the commissioners for the publication of the ancient laws of Ireland, has drawn much of his material from the old Brehon laws. These furnish most important information and present many interesting points of resemblance to other codes of law as well as differences from them. For instance, the ordeal was a common method of procedure, and such well known forms of it are found as the lot, boiling water and hot iron, as well as the curious custom, evidently a form of ordeal, where a creditor set himself before his debtor's door and fasted, the latter being obliged to abstain from food also until he gave way and paid the debt or until the creditor withdrew exhausted. Failure on the part of the debtor to submit to this test resulted in outlawry. The Irish knew also a system of *tabus* such as Cæsar seems to refer to among the Gauls. A very highly developed nobility existed among the Irish from the earliest times, as was natural in a society organized by clans, and all lands except the common lands of the clan were owned by the two highest classes, the kings and chiefs. The remainder of the freemen were divided into two classes, one owning cattle and renting land and the other renting both cattle and land from their superiors. There was besides a large class of unfree men or serfs.

In the section dealing with religion one chapter is devoted to paganism and another to Christianity. In the latter we are not told the things we should most like to know, *e. g.*, the practical effect of the new religion on the character of the people and of their institutions and the reasons for the isolation of the Irish church and its departure from the customs and practices of the other churches of Western Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries. Most of the chapter is taken up with an account of the different orders of Irish saints and their missionary work in other countries.

A good account of Irish literature occupies Chapters VIII to XII, which take up the various kinds of writings and give descriptions of such old miscellaneous collections as the "Book of the Dim Cow" (so called from having been originally written on parchment made from the skin of St. Ciaran's pet

cow), the "Book of Leinster," the "Speckled Book" of MacEgan, etc. In dealing with the historical writings and traditions of early Ireland the author is not always happy in his arguments to prove their accuracy. As an example of trustworthy tradition he relates the tale of a descent of the Picts upon the coast some centuries before Christ and of their subsequent departure to conquer Scotland. Before leaving they sought wives from the Irish and received them, but on condition that the right of succession to the kingship should always be vested in the female line. All this, says Joyce, is confirmed by the Venerable Bede, who relates practically the same story, and adds that this custom of royal descent continued among the Picts to his own day. But what is the value of Bede's evidence for an event said to have occurred 800 years before his time, unless he had independent sources of information? What is to show that he did not learn the story from the same source as the Irish writers, viz., from the Picts, the common neighbors of both? And what is the whole tale but one of those myths invented to explain matriarchy, a method of succession common to all primitive society, but the memory of which had died out among the Picts except in the case of royal descent?

The superiority of Ireland's schools and Irish learning in the centuries immediately succeeding St. Patrick is strongly and properly emphasized and the less known facts of their attainments in the sciences, especially chronology, as well as in languages, is brought out; but Joyce shares the mistake of most enthusiasts in pressing his points rather too far. For example, it is extremely doubtful if Duns Scotus can be claimed as an Irishman, while the statement that Alcuin was educated at Clonmacnoise is positively disproved by his own correspondence and his earliest biography, written before 829, which show that from an early age he was a pupil at the famous Episcopal school of York. The tendency to look on the bright side only of all things Irish is also seen in the author's suppression of the dark picture of society drawn by contemporary foreigners. Geraldus of Cambreasis, who was well acquainted with the island, is only cited for his favorable comments while his more frequent animadversions are passed over in silence. The life of St. Malachi, bishop of Armagh, written by his friend St. Bernard at whose monastery he died, is not even referred to, although it is full of details regarding the low state of religion and morals in Twelfth century Ireland. In fact, most of the unfavorable evidence of this nature is either glossed over or not referred to at all.

Nearly one-half of the book is taken up with the description of social customs and domestic life, separate chapters being devoted to such topics as the family, the house, food and public hostels, dress, agriculture, the crafts, mills, clothmaking, weights and measures, commerce, fairs and sports, burial customs, etc. Here the author is at his best, and his extremely wide acquaintance with the early literature enables him to give a vivid picture of society. Here, as throughout, the chief criticism of the author's method of treatment is his failure to indicate the exact period to which his descriptions apply. Older and newer customs are found side by side and there is little indication of change or development; in the six centuries under discussion there are few marks to distinguish one from another. The general

view of society, however, thus given bears a striking likeness in many of its traits to more modern customs and recalls Mommsen's famous comparison of the Gauls and the Irish. The funeral customs, including the "wake" and its lively celebrations, the love of athletic contests, the personal vanity, the fondness for fighting, personal devotion to the leader, the attendance on fairs, hospitality, wit and geniality, the love of poetry and music, are traits that have all come down to the present time. Even the addiction to strong waters characterized the people in ancient times, though their chief reliance for intoxication was upon ale made from barley. The great national beverage of modern days seems to have been unknown until near the close of the Middle Ages, the first mention of it being found in the Annals of the year 1405, under which date occurs the significant entry that one, Mac-Rannal, died from an overdose of *uisge*.

The main traits of this early society are clearly and convincingly portrayed, and, in spite of certain minor defects of treatment, such as the too frequent introduction—for the non-Celtic reader—of old Irish terms, and the unnecessary comparisons with Greek and Roman customs, it is the most instructive sketch of ancient Irish society that has yet appeared.

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Lucas, C. P. *The Canadian War of 1812*. Pp. 270. Price, \$3.00. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.

This book is written from the standpoint of an English imperialist. His interest in the war comes from the fact that it led to the rise of Canadian patriotism, and so was a factor in preventing the absorption of Canada by the United States. A distinctive feature of the book is the defense of the burning of Washington, on the ground of retaliation for the burning of York, England being made to pose as the avenger of Canada. At the same time the author preserves an unusually just balance in judging disputed points, and writes nothing that should wound the sense or sensibilities of Americans. This result is partly obtained by a limitation of the discussion of the causes of the war to four pages, and by the treatment of the particularly sore point, the employment of Indians, along modern imperialistic lines calculated to appeal to both countries (pp. 80-82). Perhaps the same view of the amenities of the case caused the author to limit his mention of the western causes of the war to a single reference (p. 284).

The title of the book naturally prepares one for the slight attention given to naval affairs; it nevertheless becomes obvious that this is not due to any lack of knowledge or appreciation of the importance of sea power. The main portion of the book is a straightforward account of the land operations of the war, written almost wholly from official dispatches, which have been very thoroughly examined. That the results do not present much that is novel is due rather to the diligence of Mr. Lucas's predecessors than to his own lack of zeal. The few errors, as the reference to Tecumseh's presence